WL 410
MODERN WORLD LITERATURE:
The Imperial Landscape: Ecology and the Aesthetics of Place in World Literature

The landscape thinks itself in me and I am its consciousness. Paul Cézanne

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OFFICE HOURS: W 9:30-10:20am or by appt.
CLASS LOCATION: AQ 4125
CLASS HOURS: W 1:30-5:20pm

PREREQUISITES: 60 Units including two 300 level courses in World Literature, English or Humanities

COURSE DESCRIPTION
The word landscape can mean different things. We think of it as a particular terrain, a mental geography, or a view of the countryside as seen in paintings and photographs. In this course, landscape implies an aesthetic representation of a place, including not only an individual’s view onto it, but the way it feels – an artistic impression of what “being there” means in ecological and existential terms.

But landscapes are also impacted by cultural and ideological factors: they can imply systems of power and control, or underwrite powerful religious or community associations. From Virgil’s pastoral explorations of love & death in the countryside, through mystical evocations of the Australian outback to recent “topographies” of race & culture in southern Africa or the French Caribbean, we will watch how global environments become cultural battlegrounds while learning to construct an earth-centred perspective onto the aesthetics of place. In addition, watching Taylor Swift’s mock “safari” video alongside global cinema, students will learn to interrogate the natural & the civilized as categories pressed upon imperial lands.

REQUIRED TEXT(S)/READINGS
John Wiley Landscape Routledge 978-0415341448
Virgil Eclogues & Georgics Oxford 978-0199554096
Wilma Stockenström The Expedition to the Baobab Tree Archipelago 978-1935744924
Patrick White Voss Penguin 978-0143105688
Simone Schwarz-Bart The Bridge of Beyond NYRB Classics 978-1590176801
FILOS:[provided] Noirs et blancs en couleur / Apocalypse Now / Embrace of the Serpent / Tabu

ASSIGNMENTS/EVALUATION
Short Essay 20% Midterm Quiz 20% Participation 15%
Project: Landscape & Art 15% Term Paper 30%

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